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JOINT MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE FOR
PROGRAMME AND CO-ORDINATION AND
THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE ON
CO-ORDINATION
Twenty-fifth series
19 and 25-26 October 1990
Item 1 of the provisional agenda

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

Annotated provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

The Economic and Social Council, by resolution 1988/64, stressed the importance of periodic meetings between Member States and the executive heads of organizations of the United Nations system in promoting better understanding and co-ordination of the activities of the system in the economic and social fields and of the role of the Joint Meetings of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination and the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination in that regard. The need for further improvement in the functioning of the Joint Meetings, relating in particular to the timing, participation, agenda and follow-up, was reiterated.

In the same resolution, the Council decided that, in the future, the Joint Meetings should be held in New York in conjunction with the autumn session of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination. This would facilitate the participation of the members of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination at a high level as well as the participation of the executive heads of the specialized agencies and United Nations programmes. The duration of the Meetings should be sufficient to allow for an adequate exchange of views among participants. The twenty-fourth series of Joint Meetings was held in New York from 16 to 18 October 1989.

The Council also decided that the Joint Meetings should take the following measures relating to their work:

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(a) Members of the two Committees should identify well in advance the specific issues for discussion under each topic and hold a concrete exchange of views, focusing on practical measures to solve the co-ordination problems identified;

(b) The background papers prepared by the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination should include appropriate action-oriented proposals, so as to assist the Joint Meetings in achieving concrete results;

(c) Steps should be taken to ensure the effective follow-up at the intergovernmental and intersecretariat levels of the conclusions and recommendations of the Joint Meetings.

Finally, the Council decided that appropriate measures for effective intergovernmental and intersecretariat follow-up of the conclusions and recommendations of the Joint Meetings should be reported, through the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination, to the Economic and Social Council at its second regular session in the following year.

The General Assembly, in resolution 43/219, recalled Economic and Social Council resolution 1988/64.

The Committee for Programme and Co-ordination, at its thirtieth session, reaffirmed the importance that it attached to the Joint Meetings as a unique opportunity for a dialogue between Member States and the executive heads of the organizations of the United Nations system. The improvements made at the twenty-fourth series of Joint Meetings were noted, but the Committee was of the view that further progress should be made. It was recommended that the Joint Meetings be conducted in such a way as to allow participants to have as much opportunity as possible for an open dialogue and frank and extensive exchanges. The Joint Meetings should continue to be preceded by adequate preparatory meetings, and executive heads and representatives of Member States at the highest possible level should make every effort to be present at the Joint Meetings. The Economic and Social Council, in decision 1990/282 endorsed the conclusions of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination.

At its twenty-ninth session, the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination recommended topics to be considered in the Joint Meetings during 1989-1991.

The topics for 1990 are:

1. Improvement of co-ordination in the United Nations system;

2. Natural disaster reduction.

The Economic and Social Council, in resolution 1989/109, took note of the report of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination and endorsed the conclusions and recommendations contained therein.

The Joint Meetings will begin on 19 October 1990 with a meeting at the deputy or senior level to identify major policy issues. To the extent feasible, the meeting will also formulate possible conclusions and recommendations that could be reached by the Joint Meetings. On 25 and 26 October 1990, the Joint Meetings will convene at the ambassadorial and executive head level. It is suggested that the Joint Meetings consider on 25 October the issue of improvement of co-ordination, including the prototype of the revised annual overview report of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination. On 26 October, the Joint Meetings will take up the discussion of the item on natural disaster reduction. On the afternoon of 26 October the Joint Meetings will consider draft conclusions and recommendations of the meeting.

2. Improvement of co-ordination in the United Nations system and natural disaster reduction

In accordance with past practice, the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination has prepared background papers as a basis for the discussion.

The first background paper, on improvement of co-ordination in the United Nations system, concentrates on exploring the different perceptions of Member States and international secretariats regarding the issue of co-ordination. The ramifications of these different perceptions are examined in relation to the concept, the purposes and the relative importance of co-ordination, as well as the constitutional foundation to support it. The paper, in summary fashion, reviews the practice of co-ordination, highlighting several major strands which taken together constitute the United Nations approach to co-ordination. The paper suggests related sets of questions upon which discussion at the Joint Meetings could concentrate. The questions concern general policy issues and the functioning of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination.

At its thirtieth session, the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination recommended that the twenty-fifth series of Joint Meetings consider information to be presented to it on the prototype for a revised annual overview report of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination. Information on the prototype of a revised annual overview report will be presented to the Joint Meetings and considered under the item of improvement of co-ordination.

The second background paper, on natural disaster reduction, presents the context for the consideration of natural disaster reduction by reviewing the costs of disasters and the benefits of disaster reduction. The objectives of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction are described. The paper also analyses the response of the United Nations system in the field of disaster reduction. The final section of the paper contains conclusions and recommendations.

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